



# FASHION INTERNATIONAL

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION WORLD

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## LIGHTEN UP

### SPRING '07 RUNWAY REPORT

After a season filled with dark, somber, enveloping clothes, designers literally lightened up for spring. Not only was the color palette soft (think lots of white and crèmes), but fabrics and silhouettes appeared to float and drift around the body. Daywear morphed into evening with nary a glitch. Beading, particularly chalk white à la Prada, as well as sequins and jewels added interest. Dresses were the stars

in many collections, closely followed by shorts; short full pleated skirts and cropped pants. In essence, the voluminous silhouettes that surfaced for fall/winter have been transformed and adapted to appeal to a broader audience while still providing a frisson of excitement.

MONIQUE LHUILLIER proved that she's the queen of late-day dressing with a dazzling collection that was

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## MENSWEAR COLLECTIONS

### NEW YORK - SPRING 2007

As this past show week of the spring 2007 collections aptly demonstrated, fashion (especially American menswear fashion) is in dire need of a jolt of excitement. This is especially true of the menswear collection market. While most of the collections themselves were not bad, neither were they terribly inspiring. How-

ever, one collection stood out from the pack — a remarkable feat given the fact that the designer did not hold a fashion show to promote the line. At three years old, American Chang by R. Scott French is the new kid on the block who is fast becoming the talk of the town. Also putting forth fine collections were John Bartlett, John Crocco for Perry Ellis, Loris Diran and



ELIE TAHARI

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youthful and sophisticated at the same time. Simply breathtaking were her floaty silk chiffon gowns in greige, taupe, gold and chestnut, embellished with pearls, crystal embroidery and antique bands. The few daywear pieces Lhuillier showed looked promising, particularly her cropped jacket and pencil skirt and the crisp military jacket and slim pants, both outfits in greige linen taffeta. ANAIT BIAN's collection was young, fresh and on the money. Noteworthy were the "Gatsby" inspired, pleated cotton organza tennis dresses in shades of blue green and sorbet yellow. Also very pretty, a white chiffon dress with white bead detail and godet pleated skirt. Rich in references from the '50s and '60s, MISS SIXTY offered up a fun filled, sexy collection at the Guggenheim Museum, where models of both sexes paraded down the winding ramp giving viewers an up close look at intricately detailed clothes. Perfect for lazy summer days in Capri was the yellow/white floral print sheer blouse, tapered yellow denim trousers with ankle detail, a cotton jersey tiered baby doll dress and a black silk peasant blouse belted at the empire waist. Simply terrific and very dolce vita was a waxed cotton trench coat in stark white atop matching cigarette pants. LACOSTE puts a modern spin on sportswear, but with a nod to the elegant

'30s and the social set at Cap d'Antibes. Highlights included a long pleated skirt in diaphanous white jersey meant to be worn day or night; oversized belted shirt dresses in vivid colors; the stretch pique, color tipped, cross-back tank dress; and a schoolboy, black/white pinstriped jacket and sailor-buttoned Bermuda shorts in stretch cotton pique. ELIE TAHARI's collection was a study in perfection. On tap were delicate fabrics ranging from gossamer silks to linens and brocade, pale neutral colors plus gorgeous beading and embroidery. The silhouette was smaller in proportion, with cropped jackets paired with pencil or full pleated skirts. Outstanding was Tahari's chic embroidered coat and dress, an empire waist brown matelassé dress with puff sleeves, a cropped swing jacket with appliquéd embroidery atop bone linen shorts with belted cuffs and embroidered tank. Another cropped jacket features a jeweled pin as accent. This early '60s inspired jacket is paired with a wasp-waisted brocade bubble skirt. BCBG MAX AZRIA offered a white-hot collection that was the personification of romance and innocence. Clothes floated away from the body in a palette of soft pastels and white. Simply beautiful was the opening group of white separates, particularly the ruffled voile top, paired with linen wide-leg

pants, an eyelet detailed tunic slipped over a lace trimmed voile slip dress and the vanilla crêpe de chine dress with soutache detail.

From start to finish, REEM ACRA's collection was simply perfect. As expected, her late-day frocks were gorgeous, interpreted in fabrics such as organza, georgette and silk chiffon. However, daywear was equally lovely and worth noting, especially the metallic jersey tee paired with a mini hound's-tooth skirt, the ribbon stripe coat forming a graduated stripe and a pretty silk linen dress. After dark, Reem ups the ante with a gold jacquard box pleat Empire dress, a bias gown in pecan colored satin back crepe and an empire camisole dress in lavender silk chiffon. LISA THON's collection is a retailer's dream with safe, pretty saleable frocks in a warm color palette. Standouts included cocktail dresses in banana or pale yellow chiffon; ecru cotton lace, belted at the empire waist; and, for cocktails poolside, a short chocolate chiffon caftan over matching bikini. There was one strikingly pretty peach satin coat that featured a paper bag waistline and a directional full-skirted empire dress in terracotta silk taffeta. At PORTS 1961, the inspiration was Argentina's rich cultural heritage, interpreted through the rhythms of the tango. This seductive

the aspiring designers who showed at the Academy of Art University show.

As retailers are the show attendees most firmly rooted in reality, we tapped Colby McWilliams of Neiman Marcus on the state of designer menswear. Says Mr. McWilliams:

Regarding spring '07, just to give you a few of my thoughts on trends, I believe that overall the feeling is 'light' and comfortable. Bottom line, the major story is light dressing with a focus on jackets. Many of the collections featured 'shorts' as a trend, primarily shown with un-constructed jackets as a more "dressed up" approach to dressing. Men will most certainly wear jackets and shorts but probably not together. Other classic categories will prevail, such as t-shirts and polos, again shown with jackets.

#### American Chang by R. Scott French

American Chang is a contemporary menswear sportswear concept designed in New York City whose aesthetic encompasses the best aspects of traditional men's tailoring, a healthy respect for the ever-burgeoning global marketplace and a deep appreciation for the youth culture and the political and social matters of the world at large. Represented by the "Power Poodle" logo, American Chang is designed for the young and the young at heart, with ironic (and graphic) blazers; fun, flashy tee-shirts, and tailored

trousers for the "guy who doesn't mind being noticed but, more importantly, thinks he should be noticed." This line is for the guy who desires to conform to the norms of the world yet express his own individualistic style, even if he's wearing a structured pinstriped blazer with a cheeky, cartoon-like graphic silk lining. Mr. French's tongue is firmly lodged in his cheek as he sends out into the marketplace an embroidered jacket with cartoon-like "POW!" patches and a cool, "just for me" lining. With the most expensive piece in the collection selling for less than \$600, American Chang is bold and audacious with the signature pick stitch detailing and linings, ranging from an army fatigues print to green charmeuse, glowing orange and power purple. Some fans of the line can even be seen wearing their blazers inside out, all the better to show their wild side.

The spring 2007 collection consists of 80 pieces, but Mr. French's fall 2007 line promises to be bigger and even more creative in its scope (new for fall will be the addition of Swarovski crystals in even more fantastical graphics on the blazers and trousers, with a wider range of influences for tee-shirts, shirts and other top pieces). American Chang has fans in every sector of the market, from the older gentleman who's first fascinated by the fit and quality fabric (and who's then enchanted by the colorful lining), to the 18-25

year-olds who are first attracted by the graphic tees and who are then further seduced to upgrade and stretch their personal vision of themselves with the cool blazers and trousers. The line can be found at over 60 stores across 16 states in the USA and Asia, with an increasingly strong presence in some of New York's most exclusive and trendy boutiques.

#### JOHN BARTLETT

Although no longer a "young designer", Mr. Bartlett still generates excitement when he puts on a show in the tents. No longer being the new kid on the block has its advantages. Pre-show, Mr. Bartlett was spotted peeking out from the runway entrance with a wide smile on his face. No wonder — he chose his classic American collection (this season's theme) to a capacity crowd.

The color palette for the season centers on a soft dove gray accentuated with navy. The feeling is relaxed: navy hoodies and gray tack trouser-sweatpants with racing stripes and a few extra pockets. The shade of gray was not dull and worked with the pieces, and he did equally well with casual and office looks. For a more professional environment, we recommend his snugly fitting pearl gray paired jacket with a pale blue shirt and periwinkle tie. This customer might also go to the office in a cream linen suit with a bright yellow shirt underneath, or he might choose a pinstriped suit with

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mood was translated through cinched waists, slim pants, bare skin and controlled volume, in a color palette comprised of cool earth tones and warm muted reds paired with black. Very chic — the washed leather vest atop a gold silk blouse and pleated hem mini skirt; a hand knit sweater coat tossed over a coral silk bandeau jumpsuit, accented with a stone embellished grosgrain necklace; an ecru linen coat with melon sleeves; and a sculpted jacket in coral organza over a print blouse and chintz linen shorts. There were some elegant late-day dresses ideally suited for the young socialite at SASS & BIDE. One such number featured a matte silver sequined sleeveless bodice, narrow black ribbon belted waist and tulip skirt. The black and gold lame pinafore dress struck a vintage (Geoffrey Beene) note, as did a harness dress in the same fabric. PETER SOM continues to impress with his mastery of cut and proportion. While still touching on all of the season's key trends, Som manages to offer a fresh and sophistication spin that sets him apart. To wit, his Prussian blue changeant (glacé effect/iridescent) taffeta coat, over white organdy top and organza frosted damask pleat skirt, references Balenciaga at first glance but, on closer inspection, is totally modern. Other winners included a chic gray raffia damask, '50s inspired coat unexpectedly

paired with skinny pants in truffle color pinwale pique; an ivory cotton jacquard jacket with buttermilk colored pleated skirt in handkerchief linen; the hourglass dress in a bold floral linen radzimir; and a gorgeous empire gown in blush washed organdy.

## PLATFORM 2 Spring 2007

Platform 2, the new trade show from the producers of The Train, made its debut at Roseland Ballroom with nearly 60 bridge and contemporary collections. For those specialty store retailers looking for interesting international and U.S. based apparel and accessory resources, Platform offers buyers a "clean slate" to tempt their customers.

The show attracted more than 1,000 visitors during its three day run. According to Herve Huchet, fashion director, Fédération Française Du Prêt-À-Porter Féminin, "We were pleased with the first edition of Platform 2 and look forward to expanding the show next season and making it stronger."

FI made the rounds of the trade show and we were impressed by the diversity of collections, therefore in no particular order is a capsule review of those lines that stood out in terms of design, quality, uniqueness and price.

**CORALIE LEETS DESIGN (USA):** This jeweler caters to upscale boutiques with a fanciful, high fashion collection comprised of semiprecious stones and 18K gold. Outstanding — the modern cross necklace, delicate bead necklaces and gold bangle with stone embellishment

WISHING YOU  
JOYFUL  
HOLIDAYS  
AND  
A  
HAPPY  
&  
PEACEFUL  
NEW YEAR!

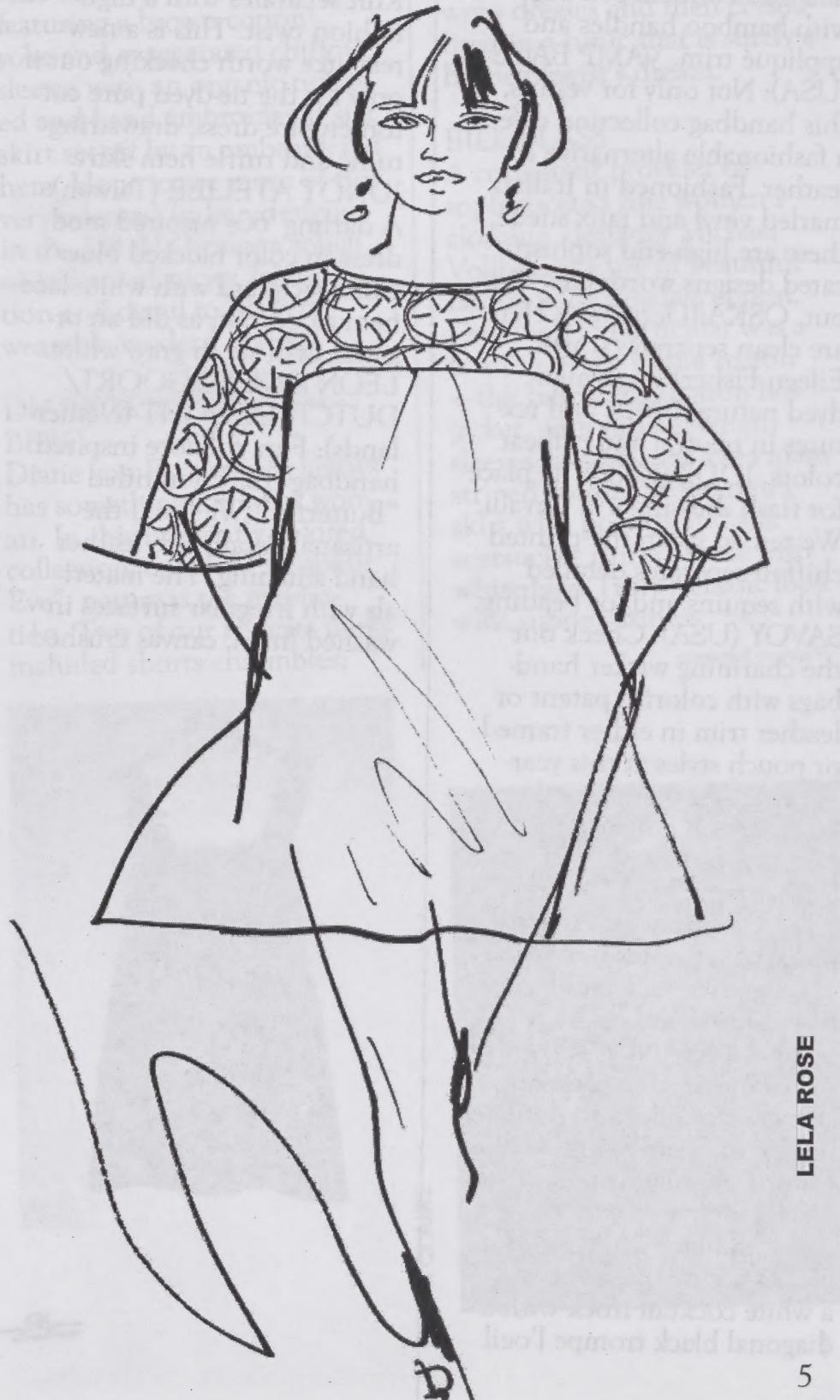
# DRESSES, SHORTS & DENIM DELIGHTS

## SPRING 2007 - VOLUME IN THE RIGHT PLACES

One of this season's favorite looks is the short dress. Most baby doll style and/or empire waist tent dresses are not only a great way to show off the legs, but the roomy fit is forgiving of body imperfections and comfortable and easy to wear. Volume is also present in the fuller shorts, as seen in Diane von Furstenberg's collection. These could be dressed up or down. The dress styles and the shorts are extremely feminine and appealing, harkening the late '60s and early '70s, but with a clear direction forward. Key items of the season and wardrobe necessities can be found in the collections of the new designers as well as the old guard.

### LELA ROSE

Light and airy laundered taffeta, silk and burlap were the main fabric players in this feminine collection that could be worn by a woman of pretty much any age! A few favorites include a gracefully draped saffron taffeta blouse, with full elbow length sleeves and tatted lace (taffeta) chest detail, worn with malted sateen full balloon-like shorts featuring ample pockets. The cocoa quilted voile lantern sleeve dress also features pockets, as does the great looking silver dot burlap, high waist, V-neck



LELA ROSE

offered in five colorways.

**VIVA PAQUITA** (France): This is a find for witty straw accessories à la Schiaparelli et al. We adore the straw pirate hats and cone-shaped bags with bamboo handles and appliquéd trim. **VAMP BAGS** (USA): Not only for vegans, this handbag collection offers a fashionable alternative to leather. Fashioned in Italian marled vinyl and faux suede, these are high-end sophisticated designs worth checking out. **OSKA** (Germany): Here are clean separates (think Eileen Fisher) in garment dyed natural fibers, and textures in neutral and offbeat colors. **JODE** (UK): The place for flash dressing à la Cavalli. We zeroed in on the printed chiffon separates detailed with sequins and/or beading. **SAVOY** (USA): Check out the charming wicker handbags with colorful patent or leather trim in either framed or pouch styles at this year-old firm. Also noteworthy — the cotton crochet overlay on straw totes with Vacchetta leather trim. **NATHALIE CHAISE** (France): A terrific range of separates in natural cottons, silk voile and beautiful 100% bamboo fiber.

**JORDI LABANDA** (Spain): An extensive chic dress and sportswear collection designed by one of Spain's hottest illustrators. Highlights include the black crop pants and white top with black oversized sunglasses across the front and a white cocktail frock with a diagonal black trompe l'oeil

hand running from hip to shoulder. Labanda also offers a complete swimwear line in a multitude of interesting prints. Definitely not to be missed. **TANGERINE** (USA): Knit separates with a high fashion twist. This is a new resource worth checking out if only for the tie-dyed pure cotton empire dress, drawstring tunic and ruffle hem skirt. **JUNOT ATELIER** (Taiwan): A darling '60s inspired mod dress in color blocked blue/white jacquard with white lace hem stood out, as did an organza twin set in gray/white. **LEONTINE HAGOORT/DUTCH DELIGHT** (Netherlands): Fun, folklore inspired handbag collection titled "Butterfly." We loved the artisanal details like leather hand stitching. The materials with irregular surfaces in washed linen, canvas crushed

leather and nylon twill. The bags come with decorative embroidery offset by the rugged hardware for a contemporary feel. **ORANGIA** (USA): Miami-based collection worth noting for the diaphanous cocktail dresses in pale silk chiffons subtly detailed with gold Lurex embroidery and genuine python.

For further info on the designers and/or upcoming Platform 2 trade shows, contact: Annik Klein, Sodes, Inc. c/o KX Associates 525 Broadway, New York, NY 10012 Phone: 212 925-6349 [www.platform2newyork.com](http://www.platform2newyork.com).

JORDI LABANDA



"DRESSES..." cont'd from page 5

tie-front dress, and a short full skirt worn with a quartz short sleeved tweed jacket with blush stone detailed belt. Finally, a lovely white taffeta and tatted lace short dress, again with pockets, takes you from dinner to dancing.

#### DEREK LAM

There's a double treat here, where the clothes and shoes had a oh so natural feeling. Wonderful are the comfy McCardell popover dresses, one natural laundered with "Amish" blanket quilting, the other navy/black and chestnut raw silk — perfect for the more casual affair. The color blocked pieces really stood out! Great for that red carpet gala were the pleated silk chiffon gown in black, leaf and aquatint, and a pleated camisole gown in black, leaf, aquatint and chestnut. The shoes made a definite statement. Outstanding were the gray leather and black matte crocodile Kiri platform shoe with wooden heels and the very nice patent leather Venus platform shoe, shown in black, navy, gray and white. Derek Lam also designed the handbags and eyewear. We are looking forward to seeing his work as Creative Director of Tod's.

#### SABYASACHI

Sabyasachi Mukherjee, designer for the Sabyasachi label, showed for the first time in the U.S. and proved to be a great mixer of texture and patterns with a collection that is whimsical, beautiful and exoti-

cally opulent. A white, hand printed cotton voile shirt with bat wing sleeves juxtaposed with an organic hand printed pink silk skirt, with a textured and hand embroidered hem and a textured cotton sash. Also fun was a little dress featuring a brown cotton yoke and exaggerated chiffon sleeves with an organic printed and hand embroidered silk skirt set-off by an embroidered hem. Hope to see more of this very talented Indian designer in the US. He brings a touch of Indian ethnicity, fabrication and detail to his very wearable modern designs.

#### DIANE VON FURSTENBERG

Diane von Furstenberg always has something for every woman. In this brilliantly colored collection, entitled "all about Eve", nature is the inspiration. Two of our favorite looks included shorts ensembles;



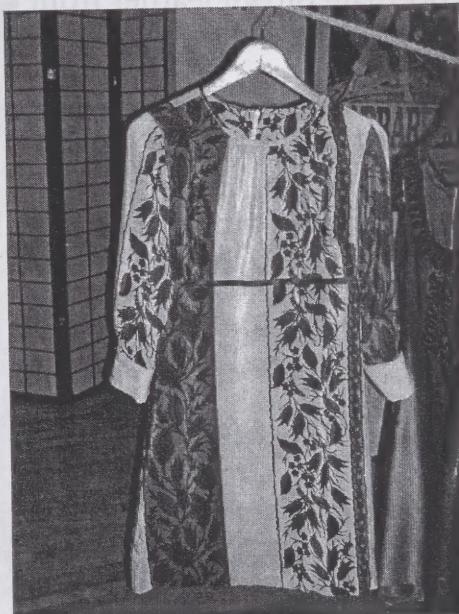
COLEYCLAIRE

white satin shorts worn under a navy blue/black/white scattered stones print georgette swing top; and poppy, silk linen shorts worn with Ikat swing top. Another great print is the python lamé used in one of her famous jersey wrap dresses and then crystallized in a tunic that is surely a herpetologist's dream.

#### BILL BLASS

A consistent provider of sophisticated fine women's clothing, designer Michael Vollbracht's use of beautiful fabrics adds timeless appeal. One look in particular was a favorite of the entire season — the yellow silk/cotton box jacket, with quarter-length sleeves, shown over a sea foam striped cotton ottoman full skirt with pockets and silk seersucker ruffle blouse with white belt. Truly a classic look with subtle sexiness.

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long shorts rolled up to keep him cool in the dog days of summer. Bartlett moved into another classic color — tan — and brightened it up with a pretty maize yellow. We loved the soft crew neck sweater in dove gray with maize horizontal stripes and the matching knit swim trunks that ended at the knee, as well as the elbow length maize sweater.

**Accessory Alert!** Under Mr. Bartlett's able hand, Ghurka never looked so good! The bulk of the pieces were smart weekend bags such as the "Maritime", a huge leather drawstring rucksack in chestnut brown from the "Original" collection with a reinforced flat bottom. In the "Business" collection we liked the cream twill "Express" satchel with two handy large pockets on the front. Also notable was the "Cavalier" tote in cream canvas trimmed in chocolate brown leather from the "Grand Central Collection".

#### PERRY ELLIS

Designer John Crocco started it right by sending out a model wearing a slim white cardigan and soft dove gray pants. Perhaps menswear designers collaborated over dinner a few months ago and decided that everyone was going to keep the palette in the gray tones, do some muted stripes, and keep the looks soft and easy. Soft and easy it was, with a

sheer dove crewneck, matching square cut Lycra swim trunks and white espadrilles. Drawstring styles abounded, with fewer patch pockets than before but, for a more formal feeling, there were skinnier than skinny white pants that worked with a sheer cream crewneck and camp shirts in

gray and white striping. More Miami Beach in feel was the cream tank and skinny cream windowpane pants. For more formal occasions, another favorite, the gray linen bathrobe coat worn over slightly paler gray trousers. Mr. Crocco showed an embossed white suit with side vents and soft

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R SCOTT FRENCH

## ABAETÉ

Designer Laura Poretzky presented a very glamorous, yet wearable collection. The models appeared as starlets wearing memorable ensembles like the Eva jacket with Swarovski crystals and the Goldie short and Bianca pump. Perhaps it's the famous names, like the Jagger dress comprising a great little yellow chiffon dress with ruffled V-neck and semi-corseted bust and waist. The footwear and bags are Abaeté for Payless and the wonderful wide brim sun hats are Suzette Art Couture for Abaeté.

## MALANDRINO

Malandrino's collection titled "Metropolis" was modern urban with mostly short hemlines. There were classic pieces with a futuristic twist, yet there was an '80s feeling sans the big hair. Standout pieces include nickel cotton sateen oversized trench coat with a cylinder stand up collar, the solar duchesse satin dress, and the eclipse sequin mini dress for evening; while the blanc cotton Lurex trouser suit works for the office or evening. The show itself was quite the theatrical production, especially at the end, with the models standing on scaffolding with blinking lights – a bit jailhouse rock.

## GINA MANTELLI FOR OTEERRE

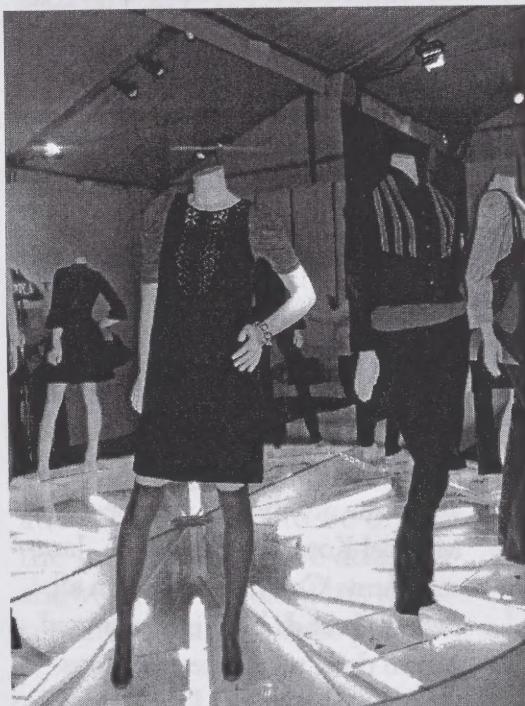
The Gina Mantelli label for Otreerre was first introduced in the USA in 2004. For spring, this bridge collection

offers some great Italian-made quality pieces in wonderful fabrics like piqué, along with great casual styles like the white cord stretch pants and jacket, hand painted tees, and trench coat. A lovely little floral blouse bespoke femininity, and a small group of knits rounded out the collection. We'll be keeping an eye on this label.

Another brand new label to watch is coleyclaire by the designers Kathleen Hayes and Amy McCormick, who recently had a launch party celebrating a small collection of sweet dresses and skirts. This new collection is very wearable, especially the silk jumper in brown or black with a white dove emblem on one front pocket. Also nice, the creamy white lace, strapless dress with the orange ribbon sash at the waist, and the ivory, brown and navy blue foliage silk print short dress with quarter length sleeves.

## DENIM DELIGHTS

Keep an eye on new denim lines incorporating the use of LYCRA®, in particular the T400 that allows for aggressive washes and the XFIT, which provides great comfort and superior fit. The XFIT is a patented cross-weave technology that uniquely delivers the benefits of four-way stretch, allowing more comfort in movement (before there was only a two-way stretch) as explained by designer Mik Serfontaine. His Serfontaine jeans are a new favorite because of their lightweight and form-fit without constriction, and the snake emblem hardware adds to their sexiness. LYCRA® hosted a lounge during fashion week featuring looks from designers incorporating this denim innovation. These included Charlotte Ronson, Derek Lam, Doo.Ri, Goldsign, Rock & Republic, 3.1 Phillip Lim and Zac Posen.



LYCRA® Denim Lounge

## SWIM SPRING 2007 PART II

### EXCITING INNOVATIONS FROM LYCRA®

The highlight of our Miami trip was a chat with Ninabeth Sowell, North America Business Manager for Lycra® and her counterpart, Diane W. Lober, of Invista, Lycra's® parent company. We met these two top executives at the Lycra® Pavilion at the Raleigh Hotel, mid-way through the IMG Swim Shows. Diane and Nina Beth are so accustomed to working with one another that they complete each other's sentences.

Diane began the conversation by discussing Lycra's® collaboration with author Kelly Bensimon's latest coffee table book, "The Bikini Book", which features iconic photographs of famous swimsuits, many of them by Jantzen who has been using Lycra® in their swimsuits since it was first introduced in 1959.

Dianne: This is Kelly's third book. Ninabeth, We knew that they wanted to focus on the 60th anniversary of the bikini. Lycra® revolutionized the bikini. When the bikini was first created by Louis Reard it was made from non-elasticized fabrics. Let me give you a time line: 1959 — The birth of Lycra  
The early 1960's — The advent of the first elasticized bikini made with Lycra.

2006 — Lycra introduces Xtra Life Lycra® in time to be used for the annual 2007 swim season after being in the works for five years.

Lycra® begins a program dedicated to educating the fashion community about Xtra Life Lycra®.

Diane: They've had designers put it (Xtra Life Lycra®) into their line. The next step in the process is for the sales reps to educate the retailers. Ninabeth works with the retailers to make sure the consumers understand and ask for it. This year, we've had a fully integrated program with Elle Magazine and Bloomingdales. We've held a fashion show at two Bloomingdale's stores and have conducted in-store training for the sales associates.

What's new about Xtra Life is that Lycra® has built this technology, which protects the suit against "bag and sag", into the fiber used in bathing suits and matching cover-ups. This innovation is important because, after extensive consumer research, the Lycra® company found that consumers relate to "bag and sag" very clearly. It is also a process that renders Lycra® far more impervious to harsh chemicals such as chlorine. Xtra Life technology is present in a wide range of markets, from mass through couture, from Wal-Mart to Michael Kors and La Perla.

Typical Lycra® content in a swimsuit is 15%. It can go up to 50% in the body-slimming suits such as Anne Cole Suddenly Slim. Interestingly, Xtra Life Lycra does not feel different. Some of the designers who have used it for their spring 2007 line are Red Carter, Becca, Michael Kors, Betsy Johnson, Jantzen, Anne Cole, La Perla — in all, over 30 brands have incorporated it into their most recent designs. And, thanks to Xtra Life Lycra®,

these new Swim 2007 bathing suits will have a longer lifespan than before.

After our discussion of Xtra Life Lycra®, it was with great interest that we viewed the outstanding Lycra® Show, handled by New York's top-flight PR firm, LaForce + Stevens. In an introductory speech at the start of the show, Kelly Bensimon, also a LaForce + Stevens' client, spoke of the mixing of nostalgic elements (daisy cut-outs) with Xtra Life technology.

The show kicked-off with updated versions of sexy Bond Babe bikinis, high-waist looks à la Ursula Andress and some skimpier styles. All were accessorized with droll matching knit swim caps. Huge turquoise daisy jewels on a tiger print bikini by Michael Kors was a novel way to wear daytime jewelry. Sixties Daisy cutouts also made an appearance (definitely a trend). This retro theme, with each decade from the fifties to the present day, worked well and served to keep the show interesting from start to finish for the over capacity crowd.

### RED CARTER

RED CARTER, one of the designers involved with Xtra Life, also showed a whimsical and memorable collection. Carter is known for his nautical themes, so it was no surprise that he opened the show with a Gidget style navy maillot ending at mid-thigh and piped in white. Jaunty white sailor caps added to the effect. He brought the newly revamped men's line out as well. The capacity crowd loved the white square cut men's briefs and the even briefer flame red trunks.

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suede slipper loafers. Overall, it was easy on the eye, and we admire Mr. Crocco's skill with a tone-on-tone palette and for continuing the House's reputation of upscale, easy All-American style. Prints were non-existent, save a white tee with an iconic print of the young handsome Perry Ellis, which fittingly closed the show. Men will feel safe, and comfortable in this collection.

#### LORIS DIRAN

Loris Diran's spring 2007 collection is all about the sixties, "one of the most architectural periods in modern fashion history and how that sense of linear translates to today's emphasis on hand-finish and 'Demi-couture' detail(ing)." He also demonstrated, with a light and sure hand, how to take a very structured silhouette and relax it in both form and fabrication. Says Diran:

I was very influenced by the images of Twiggy and Jean Shrimpton photographed by the upstart photographers of sixties London ... David Hemmings and the super model Verushka rolling in ecstasy during a photo shoot in the 1966 film 'Blow Up' and, of course, the image of the so young and rakish Mick Jagger in a super slim suit before he discovered Glam Rock. My collection is not so much an ode to this bygone era as it is a vision of where this esthetic finds its relevance in today's return to structure.

True to his signature style, Mr. Diran is pure Gary Grant with a Postmodernist flair. His suits are superb, especially when matched with youthful graphic tank tops. Attention must also be paid to his laser-like attention to the smallest details, the craftsmanship therein and the mixture of fashion-forward with the classic silhouettes.

#### ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY SPRING 2007

Established in 1929, Academy of Art University is the largest accredited private art and design school in the US with 10,000 students throughout San Francisco, as well as nationally and internationally through the online program. Fashion majors number almost 1,200 and study under the guidance of experienced fashion professionals, many of whom graduated from St. Martins, the Royal College of Art, and Parsons. Academy of Art University is nationally accredited by ACICS, NASAD, Council for Interior Design Accreditation (formerly FIDER) (BFA-IAD), and NAAB (M-ARCH).

MFA fashion graduates from the Academy of Arts University in San Francisco showcased their debut collections in the Bryant Park Tents during New York Olympus Fashion Week for the second year in a row and it turned out to be one of the most informative and fun shows of the week. This presentation was the best proof

yet that the talent pool that constitutes the next generation of fashion industry stars and tastemakers, while seriously talented, are also very much aware of what it takes to succeed in the ever-changing landscape of the global fashion design marketplace. (The Academy of Art University is the first and only educational institution to promote its recent fashion graduates with this extraordinary opportunity).

Of the three menswear collections that were shown, we chose our two favorites Masamichi Matsushita and Susan Fort (collaborating on one collection) and Pablo Fernandez. The depth of talent displayed by them all bodes well for their individual futures in the business. We were treated to a student show that was quite a bit more sophisticated than the typical student show. Also interesting was the fact that nearly every participant channeled the eighties in some form or fashion.

Japanese native and cutting-edge fashion designer Masamichi Matsushita collaborated with textile designer Susan Fort to create futuristic prints using organic wools donated by Vermont Organic Fiber Company ([www.vtorganicfiber.com](http://www.vtorganicfiber.com)). Mainly an outerwear collection, the best and most distinctive pieces were the various jackets in their riotous color combinations.

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The "Little House" (on the Prairie) bordeaux bandeau bikini, with a matching skirt and plenty of crochet ruffles, looked at once both retro and modern. One of his strongest cover-ups was the sheer white negligee style caftan/robe. He accessorized it all with huge fifties style cocktail rings, bangles and a fun pair of green bug-shaped sunglasses the late Carrie Donovan would have coveted. Shoes varied from patent leather peep toe sling backs to espadrille wedges to leopard skinny stilettos.

Carter's sense of fun came through. The fun and campy presentation reminded us of Betsey Johnson's crowd-pleasing shows at New York Fashion Week. Overall, his show was the most entertaining presentation of the week.

#### SWIMWEAR ACCESSORIES

Finally, a major trend, which appeared in many of the shows and presentations, was the overriding emphasis on accessories. Bathing

"MENSWEAR" cont'd from page 11

Fun-loving men will enjoy the colorful Daffy Duck sweaters in turquoise, cream and gray. The most daring of them will wear it with turquoise baggy trousers as shown on the runway.

Pablo Fernandez, a native of Uruguay, incorporated his fashion and knitwear design focus into an ultramodern menswear collection inspired by the early '80s, vintage cartoons and WWI paraphernalia. Best of show here include his sweaters, the sleeveless,

suits have become such a large market, that accessory designers are creating pieces to wear while at the beach. Hosiery has also made an enormous comeback, so much so that even swimwear designers used it on their runways. An outstanding example of this was the nearly sheer buff pointelle thigh highs worn with a pretty Versailles print Red Carter maillot with a little bit of ruffle.

However, one of the best accessories we discovered at the Miami Convention Center — Jackie Trebilcock's Holster Belt line. The low-slung belt bag is meant for the beach, and may be the new fanny pack. Jackie's holster belt is an update on the iconic white holster belt that Ursula Andress wore over her white bikini in one of the early James Bond films. Even further back in time, bad-boy outlaws wore low-slung holsters in hundreds of films set in the days of the Wild West.

Jackie's Holster is the answer to

hooded puffy jacket; and his "klingon army officer" long coat with exaggerated shoulder, a zippered hood and multi-pocketed detailing. Pablo, a 2004 CFDA Scholarship Award recipient was awarded an internship at Louis Vuitton in Paris for 2007 after Christophe Girard, Deputy Mayor of Paris, responsible for culture and Director of Fashion Strategy of the LVMH Fashion Group, met Pablo and viewed his portfolio.

that nagging question, "Where can I put this?" and presents a great alternative to carrying a bag in which the contents get jumbled-together. There are pockets for IPod, Sidekick, BlackBerry, cell phone, wallet, as well as for business cards and loose change. For this season, Jackie reports that the greatest interest is in the cloth green camouflage print, solid black and navy belts as they are the most unisex items in her collection. The basic cloth belt has five pockets, and is fully adjustable for waist sizes ranging from 32-41". Holster belts are great for life on and off the beach. For city life, she recommends the denim and corduroy models with grommet detailing and the deluxe leather model, all of which she reports have done very well. For more information, visit [www.holster-us.com](http://www.holster-us.com)

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